

# Wisconsin Main Street Annual Report

2004 to 2005



## Cover Photo

Taste of Lake Country, held downtown on Pewaukee's lakefront, is Positively Pewaukee's premier event. Held annually the last weekend in July, this event features 20 Lake Country restaurants with food choices ranging from Lobster Ravioli to single-scoop custard cones. A large stage is constructed on the beach and guests are encouraged to dance the night away in the sand listening to great regional music. Taste of Lake Country and the Pewaukee 2004 Taste Committee was recognized as the Best Creative Fund Raising Effort at the 2004 Wisconsin Main Street Awards for raising \$14,000. The first year the event was held it was a one day event that drew an estimated crowd between 5,500 and 7,000. In 2005 the now two-day event brought 13,000 people to this beautiful downtown community. This event is a positive partnership with the City of Pewaukee, utilizing hotel tax revenues to create a greater sense of community and to attract people from outside the area.



Photo credit: D. J. Herda

## Acknowledgements

This publication was written and produced by the Wisconsin Main Street Program, Bureau of Downtown Development, Department of Commerce, Mary P. Burke, Secretary. The report covers program performance from July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005. The Wisconsin Main Street Program follows the National Main Street Center's trademark Four Point Approach to Downtown Revitalization and is acknowledged by the Center as a State Coordinating Main Street Program. The Wisconsin Main Street Program would like to thank the following individuals and organizations:

- The National Main Street Center for its moral support and Sheri Stuart, Program Associate, for her outstanding service to Wisconsin's Main Street Communities.
- The local Main Street executive directors for providing statistics, photographs, and information for this report.
- Jim Engle, Todd Barman, Joe Lawniczak and Tony Hozeny for editing.
- Todd Barman for design and layout.



# Letter from the Governor

Greetings,

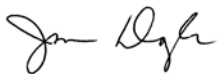
I am pleased to present the 2004-2005 Wisconsin Main Street annual report, which celebrates the accomplishments of the Wisconsin Main Street program over the past year.

The Wisconsin Main Street Program has been helping revitalize downtowns throughout the state since 1988. Downtowns play a vital role in this state's economy and quality of life. Revitalizing and maintaining the prosperity of downtowns is also a key component of my "Grow Wisconsin: Agenda 2005" initiative. Collectively, the Main Street Communities have created over 14,000 new jobs, attracted almost 2,900 new businesses, and generated over \$675 million in public and private investment since the program's inception.

From July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005, the state program provided technical assistance to 34 Main Street Communities. I recently had the pleasure of traveling to and announcing Wisconsin's newest Main Street communities, Monroe and Prairie du Chien.

I congratulate the state program and the member communities for their commitment to downtown revitalization, and I invite you to learn from their initiatives. This state-local partnership has established a firm foundation to ensure continued success in Wisconsin's downtowns.

Jim Doyle



Governor



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## Letter from the Director

Greetings,

The Wisconsin Main Street Program began 18 years ago under the watch of a talented, former Main Street Program Manager from Iowa named Alicia Goehring. Alicia, past and present staff, many partner organizations, the Wisconsin Council on Main Street and enthusiastic local leaders across the state have built a tremendous network of Main Street communities in Wisconsin. The volunteer support and successful projects continue to make a real difference in our Wisconsin downtowns. I have heard many people say, "I know when I'm in a Main Street community."

Perhaps the most impressive characteristic of the Main Street Program is the value it places on learning. Wisconsin's Main Street communities are eager to share their successes and beg, steal or borrow an idea or two. They have all made a commitment to Main Street's successful downtown revitalization model. Main Street Executive Directors are always willing to get in the car and help out a nearby community that has downtown revitalization aspirations.

It was another good year for Main Street. Congratulations go to Monroe and Prairie du Chien, our two newest Main Street communities. They join the other 32 communities currently involved in the program. Hundreds of creative projects were completed. Please enjoy this 2004-05 Main Street annual report. I hope it serves as a guide for you as you plan to revitalize your downtown.

James Engle



Director, Wisconsin Bureau of Downtown  
Development



*West Bend: West Bend Farmers' Market*

*Platteville: Mining Mural*



## What is Main Street?

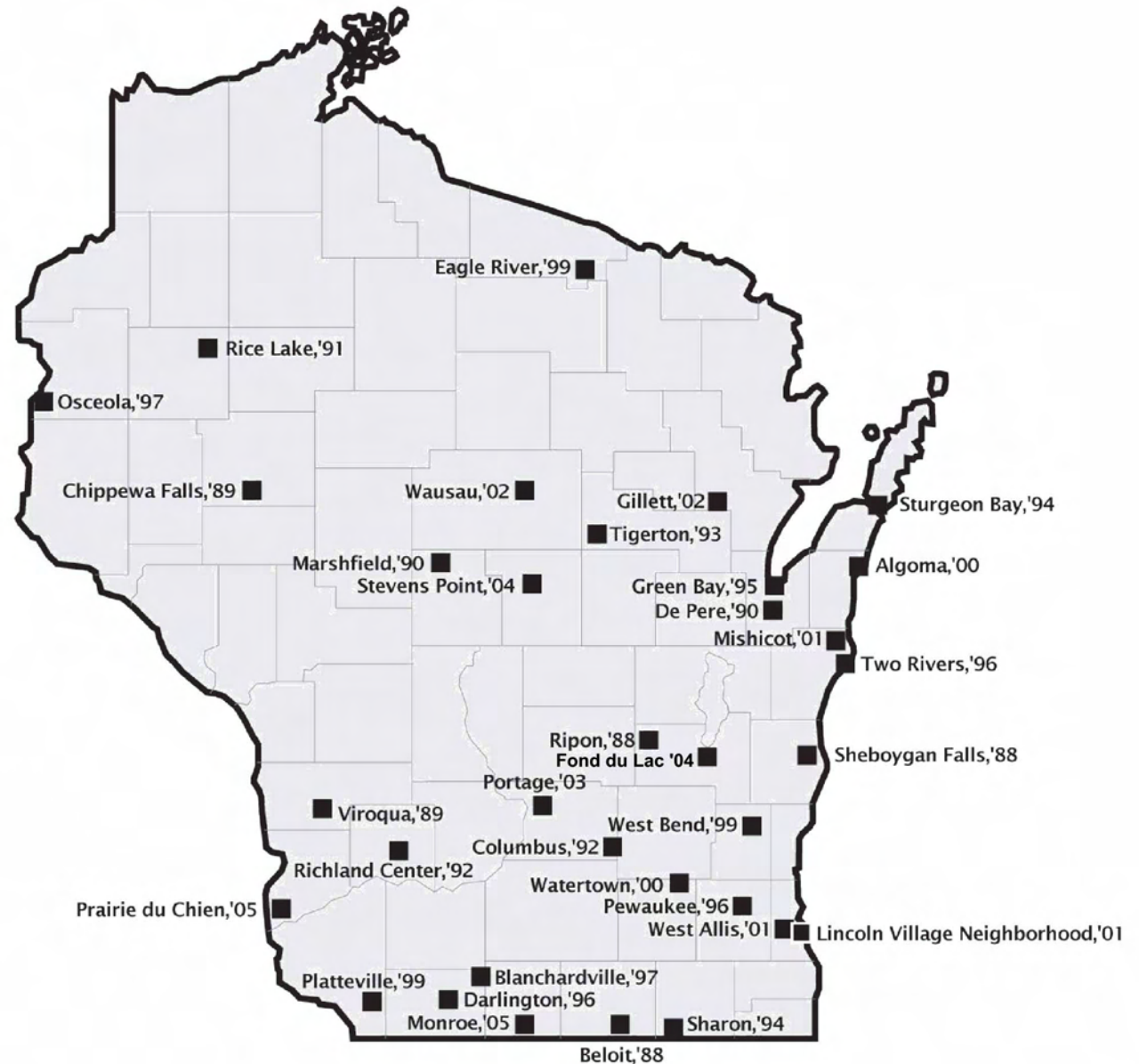
The Bureau of Downtown Development administers an economic development program targeting Wisconsin's historic commercial districts. Bureau staff provides technical support and training to Wisconsin communities that have expressed a grass roots commitment to revitalizing their traditional business districts using a comprehensive strategy based on historic preservation.

The Wisconsin Main Street Program was established in 1987 to encourage and support the revitalization of downtowns in Wisconsin. Each year, the Department of Commerce selects communities to join the program through a competitive process. These communities receive technical support and training needed to restore their Main Streets to centers of community activity and commerce.

The results have been impressive. Wisconsin Main Street Programs have generated new businesses and new jobs for their respective downtowns; façade improvements and building rehabilitation projects have upgraded the image of Wisconsin downtowns; and promotional activities have encouraged community cohesion.

## Map of Wisconsin Main Street Communities

*as of November, 2005*





# **Bureau of Downtown Development Services Available to Designated Wisconsin Main Street Communities**

Communities selected to participate in the Wisconsin Main Street Program receive five years of free technical assistance aimed at enabling them to professionally manage their downtown or historic commercial district to better compete with their managed competition. The services include:

## **1. Manager orientation and training sessions:**

Wisconsin Main Street staff conducts two-day orientation and training sessions for new Main Street managers. Topics include the Four-Point Approach to downtown revitalization, volunteer management, program manager responsibilities, and the role of the state office. Additionally, the Wisconsin Main Street Program provides quarterly two-day workshops for managers and volunteers in participating communities. State and national experts speak on relevant topics in the field of downtown revitalization at these workshops.

## **2. Materials such as manuals and slide programs:**

All new Main Street communities receive excellent resource materials on downtown revitalization topics so that they can start their own Main Street libraries.

**3. On-site volunteer training programs:**  
Wisconsin Main Street staff provides intense on-site training to committees and individuals in participating Main Street communities. This service is initially provided to Main Street committees based on the Four Point Approach to downtown revitalization. Volunteer training is also provided on specific downtown revitalization topics.

**4. On-site planning visits:**  
Wisconsin Main Street staff helps each Main Street community develop a workplan. These sessions assist communities in identifying goals and objectives, and help prioritize and develop projects for the year. Some communities also receive assistance with strategic and vision planning.

**5. On-site design assistance:**  
This free service is offered to property owners and merchants in local Main Street districts. The Wisconsin Main Street design coordinator addresses design issues of historic commercial buildings. Requests are handled on a building-by-building basis due to the individuality of each project. This allows assistance to be tailored to the specific needs of each property owner and merchant. Services include color renderings, on-site consultations, telephone consultations, building sign design, paint and color scheme suggestions, awning design, tax credit information, and information on complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

**6. On-site business counseling:**  
This is a free service provided by Wisconsin Main Street's small business specialist. Existing and potential business owners in Main Street districts are offered on-site

confidential counseling services in areas such as marketing, business planning, advertising, financial analysis, and inventory control. Follow-up assistance is also provided. The small business specialist also assists communities in planning business retention and recruitment programs.

**7. Downtown market analysis:**  
Each new Main Street community receives intense training in downtown market analysis. The Wisconsin Main Street Program works with the University of Wisconsin-Extension Center for Community Economic Development and new Main Street communities to complete a downtown market analysis that will help the community with business development efforts, and provide valuable information to each of the four Main Street committees.

**8. Advanced technical visits on specific downtown issues:**  
Wisconsin Main Street staff and outside consultants provide on-site assistance to communities in the form of one or two-day technical assistance visits. These visits are always targeted to meet the specific needs of the local community. Past visits have included development feasibility for a white-elephant building, streetscape design, merchandising, volunteer development, fund raising, preservation planning, and waterfront development.

**9. Year-end assessment visits:**  
Wisconsin Main Street staff helps both new and mature programs assess progress and address specific issues on these two-day visits.

# General Bureau of Downtown Development Services

In addition to administering the state's Main Street Program, the Bureau of Downtown Development provides general outreach to Wisconsin communities that are interested in revitalizing their downtowns. The following is a list of general services provided by the Bureau:

## 1. Field Trips

Call the Bureau of Downtown Development at (608) 267-0766 for help planning field trips to Main Street communities to learn firsthand about their progress and revitalization strategies.

## 2. Main Street Application Workshops

Learn how to successfully complete the Main Street application and how to start and operate an independent downtown revitalization program.

## 3. Offsite Assistance

Assistance by phone, fax, e-mail, or mail is available from Bureau staff and the local Main Street offices.

## 4. Case Studies

Each year the Department of Commerce recognizes the best projects completed by Wisconsin's Main Street Communities. These projects make great case studies for communities looking to tackle similar projects and many are available on the Bureau's Web site.

## 5. Wisconsin Main Street Library

Housed at the Department of Commerce, any Wisconsin resident may check out one of over 300 books, manuals, workbooks, slide programs, and videos on various downtown topics.

## 6. The Wisconsin Main Street Speakers Bureau

Local managers are available to speak on a variety of downtown revitalization topics such as fundraising, business recruitment, retail events, or promotional campaigns.



*Stevens Point: Downtown*

*Sheboygan Falls: Downtown during 2004  
PGA Championship*



## Meet the Main Street Staff

**Jim Engle** is the Director of the Bureau of Downtown Development and Coordinator of the Wisconsin Main Street Program for the Department of Commerce. He provides technical assistance in the field of downtown revitalization to Wisconsin's Main Street communities. Prior to this position he served as Assistant State Coordinator for the Wisconsin Main Street Program. He joined the staff in November 1990. Prior to this position, Jim spent four years as the Program Manager for Main Street Oskaloosa, Iowa. Jim was also the Associate Director of Admissions for Upper Iowa University in Fayette, Iowa. He holds a degree in Business Administration from Central College in Pella, Iowa. Jim is known for being an easy mark when Main Street managers are looking to sell raffle tickets, although he has yet to win.



**Todd Barman** is the Assistant State Coordinator for the Wisconsin Main Street Program. He joined the state staff in 1999. He provides technical assistance in the field of downtown revitalization to Wisconsin's Main Street communities. Todd has been recognized nationally for his efforts to improve the market analysis tools available to downtowns. Prior to this position, Todd spent three years as the Manager for the Darlington Main Street Program, Wisconsin. He holds a Masters and Bachelors degree in Landscape Architecture from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Todd is practicing what he preaches as he attempts, with varying degrees of success, to rehabilitate his historic home on the edge of Stoughton's downtown.



**J.D. Milburn** became the Small Business Specialist for the Wisconsin Main Street Program in October 2000. He provides one-to-one counseling to businesses in Wisconsin's Main Street communities, and also helps communities with business retention and recruitment, volunteer training, and other special projects. He has many years of lending experience, with an emphasis on financial packaging of small business loans. Prior employers include Wells Fargo and Bank One Corporation. Before joining Main Street, he served as a Grant and Loan Specialist in the Bureau of Business Finance, Department of Commerce. Milburn has a BS in Agricultural Business, with a minor in Finance, from Iowa State University. J.D. is the only person in the state of Wisconsin who gets excited about IRS form 990.



**Joe Lawniczak** has been the Design Coordinator for the Wisconsin Main Street Program since September 2001. Joe provides color renderings of façade rehabilitations and other design services to property owners and merchants in local Main Street districts. Prior to this position, Joe was an Architectural Designer for 12 years at Berners-Schober Associates in Green Bay, Wisconsin. For six of those years, he was an active member of the Design Committee for the Green Bay Main Street Program (On Broadway, Inc.), and served one year as vice-chairman of the City of Green Bay Historic Preservation Commission. He studied Architectural Technology at Milwaukee Area Technical College. Joe claims to have found his dream job. The rest of the staff wonders which job that could be.





## The Selection Process

Communities are selected for participation in the Wisconsin Main Street Program after going through a rigorous review process. Following are the areas that are considered:

1. **Need.** The need for the Main Street Program in the community and its expected impact on the community.
2. **Organizational Capability** The capability of the applicant to successfully implement the Main Street program.
3. **Public Sector Commitment.** The level of public sector interest in and commitment to a local Main Street program.
4. **Private Sector Commitment.** The level of private sector interest in and commitment to a local Main Street program.
5. **Financial Capacity.** The financial capability to employ a full-time manager (or a half-time manager if the population of the community is 5,000 or less), fund a local Main Street program, and support area business projects. A variety of funding sources should be utilized. A minimum budget of \$60,000 annually (including in-kind donations) is expected for communities hiring a full-time manager, while a minimum budget of \$40,000 annually is expected for communities hiring a part-time manager.
6. **Physical Capacity.** The cohesiveness, distinctiveness, and variety of business activity conducted in the proposed Main Street Program area.
7. **Historical Identity.** The historic significance of the proposed Main Street Program area and the interest in and commitment to historic preservation.

In the event that the Department of Commerce must choose between two highly rated municipalities, it will base the selection on which adds more to the geographical and population diversity of Wisconsin's Main Street Communities.



*Viroqua: Downtown streetscape amenities*

*De Pere: Downtown*



# Wisconsin Main Street Reinvestment Statistics 1988 – 2005



*West Allis: Community Sal-a-bration*



*Mishicot: Christmas*

Public Improvements	1,123
Public Investment	\$151,312,864
Building Rehabilitations	3,786
Private Investment in Building Rehabilitations	\$166,278,868
New Businesses	2,875
Business Relocations and Expansions	1,021
New Jobs	14,094
New Buildings	215
Private Investment in New Buildings	\$216,831,554
Buildings Sold	1,124
Private Investment in Buildings Sold	\$141,312,840
New Downtown Housing Units	444
Total Private Investment	\$524,423,262
Total Public and Private Investment	\$675,736,127

## Return on Investment (ROI)

Estimated real estate taxes generated by building rehabilitations and new buildings  
\$60,512,300

Estimated state sales taxes generated by new businesses  
\$193,070,000

Estimated state income taxes generated by new jobs  
\$90,475,632

Return for every state dollar invested through Wisconsin Main Street Program  
\$47.61

Return for every local dollar invested through local Main Street organizations  
\$11.43

Return for every state and local dollar combined invested through Main Street  
\$9.22

## Assumptions

- For Rehab Investment and New Building ROI, assume all improvements add to the property tax base at the full value tax rate.
- For New Business ROI, assume each new business generates \$200K/year in revenues and pays 5 percent in state sales tax.
- For New Jobs ROI, assume each new job is 2,080 hours/year and is paid at least \$7.5/hr. and generates 6 percent state income tax.

# **Economic Returns from Main Street Investment**

Reinvestment statistics only tell part of the story. Reinvesting serves as a catalyst for additional economic return on investment (ROI).

## **Property Taxes**

Successful revitalization efforts often lead to an increase in downtown property values, which in turn lead to an increase in the property taxes generated by the district. Property values increase through restoration, rehabilitation, and renovation of historic properties; infill construction (new buildings); and the increased income potential of the property based on increased profitability of downtown businesses. Property taxes help fund public services such as city, county and state government; local K-12 school districts; and area technical colleges. For many communities just stopping a history of decreasing property values is an important return.

## **Increased Sales**

Successful revitalization efforts often lead to an increase in the number of businesses downtown and an increase in the volume of sales made by downtown businesses. Real estate professionals who understand the relationship between sales and real estate value know that the highest sales-generating areas command the highest rents and report the highest valued real estate. For many communities just stopping a history of decreasing sales is an important return.

## **Sales Taxes**

Increased sales lead to an increase in the sales taxes generated by the district. Wisconsin collects a 5 percent tax on the sale of goods and services. A portion of the money collected is returned to local governments through the state shared-revenue program. Many counties collect an additional .5 percent tax on the sale of goods and services.

## **State Employment/Income Tax**

Successful revitalization efforts often lead to an increase in the number of employees working downtown which in turn leads to an increase in the state income taxes generated by the Main Street district. State income taxes help fund public services.

## **Increased Occupancy/Decreased Vacancy**

Successful revitalization efforts often lead to an increase in occupancy rate. Filling vacant storefronts results in an increased economic return equal to the rent received by those downtown property owners whose space was filled. Occupancy rates are also very important to real estate professionals. They signify the ability of the market to absorb more space and command increased rents. For many communities just stopping a history of increasing vacancy is an important return.

## **Increased Rent per Square Foot**

Successful revitalization efforts often lead to an increase in the amount of rent downtown property owners are able to receive for their space. As profitability of downtown businesses increases, demand for downtown space will also

increase. This demand translates into increased rents per square foot which in turn drive the value of commercial real estate. For many communities just stopping a history of decreasing rents per square foot is an important return.

## **The Multiplier Effect of Money**

Successful revitalization efforts in the Main Street district often lead to economic returns outside the district. The multiplier effect is a basic economic concept that describes how changes in the level of one activity bring further changes in the level of other activities throughout the economy. The multiplier effect is the rationale behind targeted economic development. For example, when a new or expanding business adds an employee to the downtown workforce, that employee spends their paycheck in the community on such items as rent/mortgage, food, etc. which in turn results in economic return by other businesses in and outside the Main Street District.

## **Increased Traffic**

Well-planned investments in image campaigns, special events, retail promotions and tourism result in increased traffic in the Main Street district by both residents and visitors. Savvy businesses can translate this increased traffic into sales. Furthermore, businesses outside the Main Street District can also benefit from increased visitor traffic, particularly lodging establishments, restaurants, and entertainment businesses.



# The Four-Point Approach

The National Trust for Historic Preservation established the National Main Street Center (NMSC) in 1980 to assist nationwide downtown revitalization efforts. The Wisconsin Main Street Program is based on the Trust's philosophy, which advocates restoration of the historic character of downtown while pursuing traditional development strategies such as marketing, business recruitment and retention, real estate development, market analysis, and public improvements.

There are no quick fixes for declining downtowns. Success is realized through the comprehensive and incremental approach of the Main Street Program. The four elements that combine to create this well-balanced program are:

*Beloit: Holidazzle 2004*



## 1. Organization

It is very important to build a Main Street framework that is well represented by civic groups, merchants, bankers, citizens, public officials and chambers of commerce. Everyone must work together to renew downtown. A strong organization provides the stability to build and maintain a long-term effort.

## 2. Promotion

Promotions create excitement downtown. Street festivals, parades, retail events and image development campaigns are some of the ways Main Street encourages consumer traffic in the downtown. Promotion involves marketing an enticing image to shoppers, investors, and visitors.

## 3. Design

This element works on enhancing the physical vitality of the business district and the potential to attract and keep customers, tenants and investors. Rehabilitated buildings, attractive storefronts, properly designed signage, clean and functional streets and sidewalks all help to create an environment where people want to shop and visit.

## 4. Economic Restructuring

Analyzing current market forces to develop long-term solutions is the primary focus of this element. Improving the competitiveness of Main Street's traditional merchants, creatively converting vacant space to new uses, and recruiting new complimentary businesses are examples of economic restructuring activities.



*Green Bay: 2005 Winterfest on Broadway*

The success rate of the four-point approach is greatly enhanced when combined with the NMSC's eight principles:

1. Comprehensive Four Point Approach
2. Incremental Process
3. Quality
4. Public and Private Partnership
5. Changing Attitudes
6. Focus on Existing Assets
7. Self Help Program
8. Action Oriented

# ORGANIZATION

The development of a strong organization is key to the success of your downtown revitalization effort. Your organization must build consensus and cooperation among the many groups and individuals who have a stake in the downtown and a role in the revitalization process. This is accomplished in large part by involving volunteers, and the Main Street Approach provides a proven organizational structure within which to direct that involvement.

Your Organization Committee will help develop and mobilize resources to complete successful downtown projects that help your community achieve its vision for the downtown area. Organization Committees focus on three major areas: Volunteer development, fundraising, and public relations. Attention to these three areas helps provide the stability to build and maintain a long-term effort.

## Volunteer Development

*Main Street Programs are volunteer-driven. Volunteers serve as ties to the entire community, and programs accomplish more with limited funds when they have a good volunteer base. Volunteers help educate the community about the Main Street Program and provide credibility, enthusiasm, and leadership. Main Street Organization Committees should engage in projects that focus on the recruitment, training, and recognition of volunteers.*

### Volunteer Recruitment & Placement

Each Main Street committee may actively search for volunteers; however, it is the Organization Committee's role to actively

publicize volunteer opportunities, make contacts, and ensure a "good fit" between the program and the volunteer. Main Street organizations find volunteers throughout the community and typically involve downtown property owners, downtown business owners and employees, friends of existing volunteers, members of service organizations with compatible interests, local government employees and elected officials, employees of corporate sponsors, and motivated residents including youth and senior

#### Effective Ways To Recruit Volunteers:

- Personal contacts
- Media stories
- Want ads
- Newsletter articles
- Brochures
- Volunteer interest cards
- Community presentations

citizens. Individuals volunteer for a number of reasons such as self-interest, altruism, social outlet, and recognition. It is important to know the primary reasons that your volunteers get involved. Develop and maintain a database with information about all of your volunteers. Once a potential volunteer expresses interest, promptly respond to that interest and thoughtfully "place" the volunteer within the organization. Give your volunteers peace of mind by constantly looking for additional volunteer help.

### Volunteer Training & Productivity

Volunteers who are "thrown to the wolves" without the necessary orientation and training may feel less comfortable and competent within your organization and may not stay long. Keeping your volunteers trained and "in the

loop" is extremely important. Board and committee officers should receive additional training in how to serve in their new capacities. Create job descriptions for volunteers that clearly define their roles. Develop training sessions and packets of information that not only describe their committee, but the entire Main Street Program.

#### Contents of Orientation Packets:

- A letter of welcome from the board president
- An organization chart
- A description of each committee
- A work plan and budget
- A job description
- A phone list of committee and board members
- Main Street brochures
- Reprints of publicity

## Volunteer Recognition

Your Organization Committee should develop a recognition program for volunteers. Thank your volunteers with cards, annual awards, public recognition, and gifts such as t-shirts that are earned for reaching a volunteer hour milestone. Of course that means it is necessary to track the amount of time your volunteers contribute. Promote your volunteers to leadership positions within the organization. An often-overlooked goal of your Organization Committee is to devise and maintain solid management and administrative principles. Doing a good job in this area is another way of recognizing the value of the time your volunteers are donating. Work to create a positive atmosphere, make volunteer work upbeat and

fun, keep promises relating to time commitments, and allow volunteers to rotate on to new projects.

## Fundraising

*To be successful, Main Street organizations must be well-funded. Money is needed to pay a manager's salary and for other administrative functions, but funds are also needed for specific projects in the downtown area. Broad-based fundraising helps communities develop increased ownership in their respective programs. Fundraising is also a very visible activity and a measure of success. Fundraising is not always a popular undertaking, but with a well-thought-out strategy and a sincere interest by the community in downtown revitalization, you can raise funds to do great things. Two concepts are critical to your fundraising success. 1) A public private partnership – most Main Street organizations receive funds from the both private sector and from local government. 2) Diversity – it is dangerous to rely on a single source of funds.*

### Sources of Funds

Main Street programs raise funds in a variety of ways. These include:

- Appropriations from Local Government – City and county government are major downtown stakeholders. They receive revenues generated downtown, and they have infrastructure and own property in the downtown. Their employees often work downtown. Local government will be particularly interested in seeing the return on investment that Main Street has generated in your community.
- Business Improvement Districts – Many Wisconsin Main Street communities use Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to help fund their programs. Wisconsin Act 184 gives Wisconsin municipalities the power to establish one or more BIDs within their community. A special assessment added to the property tax collected from owners of business properties within the BID contributes to programs aimed at promotion, management, maintenance and development of that district.
- General Appeal/Pledge Drive – The general pledge drive is usually Main Street's dominant source of funds and is certainly not limited to business and property owners within the downtown area. We recommend you start by training a fundraising subcommittee and establishing a fundraising timeline. An early task will be to develop a convincing case statement that summarizes and explains your organization's mission and needs to prospective donors. This case statement will serve as a focused message for your printed materials and your personal contacts. Your packaged product should also include your goals, track record, specific plans, and the people that are involved. Next you should strategically develop a prospect file and a plan for how each prospect will be contacted. Match potential prospects with appropriate Main Street projects, and decide who will make the contact, when, and for what proposed contribution. Have a kickoff party for the pledge drive. Make it fun, and wrap the drive up in three weeks.
- Sponsorships – Some communities seek sponsorships from large corporations, small businesses, and other entities for specific Main Street projects such as special events and facade improvement grant programs. Local corporations and other large employers often understand the benefits of having a healthy downtown to their business. However, they may be more eager to contribute to the revitalization effort when their contribution compliments their own marketing efforts. Serving as a major sponsor for a downtown special event is great advertising. Asking community alumni to contribute to specific downtown projects can also be quite lucrative. Alums love to hear from their hometowns and are often interested in helping preserve and revitalize what they remember about their childhood.
- Grants – Many opportunities exist to apply for grants that fund specific projects related to downtown revitalization such as historic preservation projects, tourism efforts, and business development.
- Events – Main Street programs almost always raise funds with high-traffic special events and events designed specifically to raise money for the Main Street Program.
- Memberships – Some Main Street organizations develop membership campaigns. Packaging benefits of membership is a key to making this type of funding source work.



## Public Relations

*Main Street Promotion Committees have a clear focus on promoting the downtown, but the efforts of the local Main Street organization need to be touted too. This responsibility falls to the Organization Committee. Some communities have accomplished great things in their downtowns, but their efforts went largely unnoticed because of a lack of public relations. A community's general knowledge about and enthusiasm for the organization have a tremendous impact on volunteerism, fundraising, and in general, the success of the program.*

### Media Relations

Developing strong partnerships with local reporters is crucial. Main Street Organization Committees must develop timely press releases and keep the media up-to-date on Main Street projects. Work with local and regional newspaper, radio and television stations to place stories and announcements. Consider regular newspaper columns or radio shows that promote the Main Street effort.

### Written Material

Create general brochures, newsletters, annual reports, fact sheets, posters, flyers and other informational pieces to keep downtown businesses, volunteers, and the public informed about your organization's progress. An attractive, well-designed logo is an important part of the corporate image conveyed by these written materials.

### Getting Out There!

Inform the public by making customized presentations to local organizations through a Main Street Speaker's Bureau. Promote the program at after hours get-togethers. Make regular visits to downtown businesses and other community leaders. Be visible.

## Learning Organization by Example

Below is a list of some of Wisconsin Main Street Communities' favorite Organization Committee projects that they completed between July 2004 and June 2005. They would be proud to share their experience. Contact information for each Main Street Program can be found in the directory on page 26.

### Volunteer Development

- *Spotlight on DFP Volunteers, Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership*
- *"On the Rack" volunteers water hanging petunia baskets, Rice Lake Main Street Assoc.*
- *Volunteer Appreciation Banquet, Revitalize Gillett*
- *Annual Social Volunteer Recognition, Stevens Point Main Street Program*
- *River Street Mural Restoration Project (at risk youth group), Chippewa Falls Main Street*
- *Flowerbox Project, Watertown Main Street Program*
- *The Viroqua JP's or Junior Partners (formerly Jaycees), Viroqua Partners*
- *Volunteer/Member Social, Community Improvement of Algoma*

### Fund Raising

- *Lake Country Business Breakfast, Positively Pewaukee*
- *Launched a 3-yr pledge drive, On Broadway-Green Bay*

- *Petunias Unlimited Banquet, Rice Lake Main Street Association*
- *4th of July Road Apple Bingo Contest, Revitalize Gillett*
- *Ducktona 500 Duck Race & Car Show, Sheboygan Falls Chamber-Main Street*
- *Pledge Drive, Stevens Point Main Street Program*
- *Return on Investment PowerPoint presentation, Chippewa Falls Main Street*
- *Carriage Rides Down Frosty Lane, De Pere Area Business Alliance*
- *Budget process tied to strategic plan and work plan, Downtown West Bend Association*
- *Main Street Tent at Shanty Days, Community Improvement of Algoma*
- *2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Block Party raised \$5,000, Tigerton Main Street*
- *Main Street Milwaukee Program, Lincoln Village Business Association*

### Public Relations

- *DFP Annual Meeting, Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership (DFP)*
- *Created a district magazine – "Merge", On Broadway-Green Bay*
- *Weekly Front Page Column in Oconto County Times-Herald, Revitalize Gillett*
- *Business 'N Bagels Quarterly Meetings, Sheboygan Falls Chamber-Main Street*
- *The Association of Downtown Businesses Newsletter, Stevens Point Main Street Program*
- *What's In It For Me? (Value of Main Street Activities to DT Businesses), Chippewa Falls Main Street*
- *Mornings on Main radio ad campaign & on location broadcasting, Platteville Main Street Program*
- *MAGIC Newsletter, MAGIC-Mishicot*
- *The Viroqua Bypass Alliance w/ Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton, Viroqua Partners*
- *Working with hired marketing firm, Downtown West Bend Association*
- *"Celebrate Algoma" Sponsorship/Memorial Program, Community Improvement of Algoma*

# PROMOTION

The purpose of promotion is to develop, refine, and market a unified, quality image of the downtown as a compelling place to shop, live, work, invest and visit. In other words, promotion gets residents, visitors, shoppers, investors, and new businesses to again see downtown as the center of commerce, culture, and community life.

Promotion Committees work to understand the changing market and appreciate their own downtown's assets. They work to identify a market niche based on the market opportunities and unique assets they've discovered. They strengthen or establish the market niche identified by creating a complimentary set of image campaigns, special events, retail events, and tourism campaigns.

Image campaigns reinforce positive perceptions of the downtown and reduce negative perceptions. Special events generate traffic, activity and positive experiences in the downtown. Retail events generate immediate sales of the goods and services offered downtown. Tourism campaigns bring a regular stream of visitors from outside the community to the downtown. A promotion must drive traffic, drive sales, drive publicity, or drive fundraising. If a promotion doesn't meet one or more of these criteria, don't do it!

## Image Campaigns

When it comes to the image residents, visitors, shoppers, investors, and potential new businesses have of your downtown, perception is stronger than reality. For example, it doesn't matter if you have acres of empty parking lots if everyone perceives your downtown as lacking

convenient parking. Because perceptions drive behavior, customers who place emphasis on convenient parking will shop where they perceive more convenient parking to be. An image campaign targeting parking can reduce those negative perceptions through strategies such as improved parking lot signage, parking lot maps, and advertising combined with positive press about the availability of parking.

### Seven Steps to Creating an Image

- Identify downtown's assets
- Compile market info
- Interpret data
- Match assets w/niches
- Write a positioning statement
- Develop a strategy
- Design a graphic icon

Well-planned image campaigns consistently accentuate the positives and dispel the negatives. The best image campaigns are based on a thorough understanding of consumer habits and preferences and focus their message on a vision for downtown. Promotion Committees select the most compelling means to communicate that message, coordinate the image campaign with other promotional activities, and distinguish the downtown commercial district from competing districts. Long term success depends on well-designed graphics, events that are creative not necessarily expensive, repeated exposure in a variety of outlets, and time.

Image campaigns include image advertising, image merchandise, media relations, and image building events. Simply communicating the fresh activity, progress, and excitement associated

with implementing the Main Street Four Point Approach often goes a long way toward strengthening the downtown's image and increasing consumer confidence.

## Special Events

Special events create reasons for people to come back downtown and foster new behaviors and attitudes. They communicate the idea downtown is more than the sum of businesses and shops, and create a backdrop for ongoing economic development. Special events are not focused on ringing cash registers during the event, although they sometimes have that added benefit. However, special events often lead to future sales when attendees have a positive experience admiring window displays, browsing open shops, and chatting with friendly shopkeepers.

### Disney's Keys to a Successful Event:

- Music
- Food
- Overlapping activities
- Appeal to all ages
- Something for free

Promotion Committees should establish regular dialogue with downtown retailers to help plan targeted events with the merchants in mind and to ensure retailers have realistic expectations about the outcomes of each special event. Themes for special events include celebrations of local talent, celebrations of local history, traditional holidays, unique local holidays, and socials. Special events should build on local assets and assets include people. The best

special events use quality graphics, target specific audiences, de-emphasize the commercial nature of downtown, are creative, lighthearted and fun for volunteers as well as visitors.

### **16 Ways to Bring a Promotion to Life**

- Start planning your promotion at least 12 months in advance
- Evaluate previous promotions
- Fill a gap in your promotional mix and calendar, set a fixed date
- Compliment other community and regional promotions
- Set and communicate clear goals, expectations
- Match activities with your target audience
- Start small, build on success
- Stress quality
- Do a flexible checklist and work plan
- Include merchants and other willing partners early and often
- Involve many volunteers, delegate responsibility
- Ensure funding
- Get the necessary permits and insurance
- Work with the media, promote the promotion
- Document the promotion, TAKE PICTURES! keep receipts
- Evaluate the promotion

## **Retail Events**

Retail events focus the community's attention on the commercial aspects of downtown. They should connect potential shoppers with interesting goods and services and

increase trade. Traditional sidewalk sales come to mind, but "Maxwell Street Days" isn't always the answer, particularly in downtowns with a low retail density. Christmas retail events also receive a lot of attention, but communities face direct competition in this area.

The best retail events are tailored to the local business mix or market niche, and build on competitive advantages such as convenience, service, familiarity, or exclusiveness. There are three categories of retail events. Cooperative promotions "sell" businesses in the same category and take advantage of the consumer's desire to comparison shop. Cross-retail promotions "sell" businesses with complimentary goods or services. Niche promotions "sell" to a specific consumer group rather than focus on the product or service mix. The keys to successful image campaigns and special events pertain to retail events too. Plan retail events near peak sales times so that customers who are in the mood to buy will buy downtown. Beware poor retail image. Use quality graphics within advertising and within stores, include activities for all ages, and have something for free.

## **Tourism Campaigns**

For many communities, tourism is their primary export industry or means for generating income from outside the community. Historic downtowns are a natural tourist destination and nationally, vacations are getting shorter and closer to home. Tourist dollars turn over 4-10 times before leaving town. Promotion Committees often devote special attention to tourism campaigns because they are aimed at customers outside the downtown's primary trade area. Typical tourism projects include walking and driving tours, regional advertising, and coffee table books.

## **Evaluating Promotions**

Remember, if a promotion doesn't drive traffic, drive sales, drive publicity, or drive fundraising, don't do it! Sometimes you won't know if your promotion meets one or more of these criteria until after the fact, and even then only if you apply a formal evaluation process. What was the attendance? To what extent did the promotion contribute to the program's mission? Was the end result worth the amount invested? What was the level of both merchant and customer satisfaction? The first step to knowing if your promotion achieved its goal(s) is to have specified goals in the first place.

## **Learning Promotion by Example**

Below is a list of some of Wisconsin Main Street Communities' favorite Promotion Committee projects that they completed between July 2004 and June 2005. They would be proud to share their experience. Contact information for each Main Street Program can be found in the directory on page 26.

### **Image Campaigns**

- *Chippewa Falls Downtown Business Directory (New booklet format), Chippewa Falls Main Street*
- *Wayfinding Signage (Pioneering the Good Life), Platteville Main Street Program*
- *"Viroqua-Abundant Life" Campaign, Viroqua Partners*
- *Image Logo incorporation into city wayfinding & entrance signage, Community Improvement of Algoma*



## Special Events

- 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Downtown FDL Fall Festival, Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership
- Taste of Lake Country, Positively Pewaukee
- Wednesday Night Farmer's Market on Broadway, On Broadway-Green Bay
- Holiday Parade, Rice Lake Main Street Association
- St. Patrick's Day Corned Beef & Cabbage Dinner, Revitalize Gillett
- PGA Promotions, Sheboygan Falls Chamber-Main Street
- Harvest Festival, Stevens Point Main Street Program
- Pure Water Days Heritage Fun Fest, Chippewa Falls Main Street
- Sweet Art Sunday, Platteville Main Street Program
- Gateway to the Weekend, Watertown Main Street Program
- Christmas at the Museum, MAGIC-Mishicot
- De Pere Cycling Classic, De Pere Area Business Alliance
- 15<sup>th</sup> Annual WI Main Street Awards Reception & Ceremony, Viroqua Partners
- Music on Main-5 week series, Downtown West Bend Association
- Algoma Variety Show, Community Improvement of Algoma
- Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony, Lincoln Village Business Association

## Retail Events

- Girls on the Town, Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership
- Pumpkin Palooza on Broadway, On Broadway-Green Bay
- Spring Into Gillett, Revitalize Gillett
- Home for the Holidays, Stevens Point Main Street Program
- Platteville Farmer's Market Nutrition Program (locally funded), Platteville Main Street Program

- Gateway Buttons and Doorpiece, Watertown Main Street Program
- Village-Wide Rummage Sale, MAGIC-Mishicot
- Farmers' Market-over 55 vendors, Downtown West Bend Association
- Holidazzle 2004, Downtown Beloit Association

## Tourism Campaigns

- Feel the Pulse of Pewaukee, Positively Pewaukee
- Developed "bus tour" itineraries, On Broadway-Green Bay
- Redesign of Web Site, Sheboygan Falls Chamber-Main Street
- Web site [www.stevenspoint.biz](http://www.stevenspoint.biz), Stevens Point Main Street Program
- National Historic Preservation Celebration-The Past Passed Here, Chippewa Falls Main Street
- Utilizing [portalwisconsin.org](http://portalwisconsin.org) for cultural events downtown, Platteville Main Street Program
- Germanfest-3 day event, Downtown West Bend Association
- Downtown Visitor's Map, Community Improvement of Algoma
- Lincoln Village Heritage Tours, Lincoln Village Business Association



Lincoln Village, Milwaukee: Tour de Dome 2004

Tigerton: 4<sup>th</sup> of July Block Party



Algoma: Algoma Main Street Car Show



# DESIGN

Design preserves and enhances the visual appearance and physical vitality of the downtown. No historic downtown is exactly the same as another, and by preserving and restoring this unique sense of place, downtown can set itself apart from the competition and attract new tenants, customers, and investors.

Design Committees educate building owners and the public about good design. They promote and lend a hand to attractive and historically-sensitive building improvements. They participate in the improvement and creation of public facilities. They assist with the creation of appropriate private and public signage. They encourage the use of attractive and creative visual merchandising techniques. They advocate a logical course of historic preservation planning. Progress in these areas will have spin-off benefits for the Promotion and Economic Restructuring Committees by improving the image of downtown, providing better spaces for events, increasing the value of occupied spaces and improving the marketability of vacant spaces.

## Building Improvements

Downtown buildings contend with disinvestment, deterioration, inappropriate alterations, and in some cases, demolition. Design Committee volunteers spread the word that, more often than not, the cost of restoring an existing historic building is far less than constructing a new building of similar quality.

While Design Committees offer property owners advice and develop design guidelines, they are not in the business of telling property owners what to do with their buildings. The

Design Committee promotes building improvements ranging from building cleaning and maintenance to complete restorations by providing free design assistance and by offering financial incentives such as facade improvement grants and low interest loans. Some Design Committees have even gone so far as lending a hand to downtown building improvement projects by coordinating volunteer labor, although thought should be given to risk of liability.

Downtowns were built over a number of years and across different eras. As a result, the buildings are of many different architectural styles. Main Street's goal is not to transform the downtown to look like it was built in one period or one style, but to build from the best of the past. This means taking steps to return each building back to its own inherent style, proportions, materials, and character. It often takes incremental building improvements downtown for people to notice change, and only then will they be motivated to make improvements themselves.

In addition to attractive and historically-sensitive building improvements, Design Committees help ensure that new construction fits within the context of its historic surroundings. By proposing guidelines regarding height, width, setback, composition, and rhythm, Design Committees enable new construction to be compatible with the surrounding architecture, yet still look like it was built today. By adhering to these guidelines, new construction fits in, but does not mimic the adjacent historic buildings, and thus does not jeopardize their historic integrity.

# Public Improvements

Public improvements include any and all public utilities, streets, parking lots, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, vegetation, lighting, benches, trash receptacles, and other streetscape and pedestrian amenities. Design Committees participate in the improvement and creation of public facilities by working with the municipality to plan large improvements and by taking responsibility for small, yet still important, improvements.

When the local municipality is willing to invest in the downtown, many building owners are more eager to make improvements to their own properties. This is why public improvements are so important, and why most Design Committees undertake some sort of visible streetscape improvement.

Public improvements must be designed to relate with the surrounding architecture, and Design Committees are a great resource to help this happen. Design Committees also work to make the downtown more pedestrian-friendly. This means better space for pedestrians and a far more inviting and useable atmosphere for potential customers. Projects can be as grand as narrowing streets and widening sidewalks or as modest as planting flowers.

Downtown businesses need parking, and Design Committees will often be faced with business owners' desire for more parking. However, in most instances, it is the management of existing parking lots, not the creation of new spaces, that needs attention. Parking solutions are often as simple as making sure the public understands the existing parking system and uses it to its fullest potential.

## Signage and Awnings

Signs downtown reflect an image, for better or worse, of the quantity and quality of goods and services available downtown. There are many appropriate types of signs found on Main Street including projecting, flush-mounted, freestanding, window, and even neon signs. Design Committees assist with the creation of appropriate private and public signage by offering free design assistance and financial incentives such as sign grants. They often set an example for quality through professional signage and awnings for their own offices or buildings. Some Design Committees have even gone so far as investing their own volunteer and financial resources into the creation of public signage such as wayfinding or directional signage.

Properly-designed signs have many things in common, no matter what type. All should be well-proportioned to the building and well-positioned on the building. All should be designed to reflect the character of both the business and the building. All should be simple in design, without a lot of unnecessary text. Too much information on a sign will make it hard to read. Design Committees often develop sign design guidelines just like they do for building improvements and new buildings.

## Visual Merchandising

Visual Merchandising deals with the display areas both inside the store and at the display windows. Similar to signs, this aspect also reflects an image of the quantity and quality of goods and services available downtown. Design Committees encourage business owners to follow a few simple principles for effective interior and window displays. These principles are as follows:

- **Attract Attention** – Properly designed window displays help to merge the sidewalk and the store interior, and create pedestrian awareness and interest in the products or services inside. Properly designed interior displays draw attention to the products for sale.
- **Keep it Simple** – The average person will make the decision on whether to enter a store in less than 3 seconds. It is important that all displays be free of too much information or clutter.
- **Change Displays Frequently** – Displays should be changed at least once per month and before each holiday and special event. This will prevent people from becoming too familiar with a particular display, which causes them to not even notice it anymore.
- **Use Color, Pattern and Light** – Each of these are essential in attracting attention. Lighting can be used to highlight important aspects of a display. In addition, it is always recommended that window display lights be left on even after hours to catch the attention of people downtown at night.
- **Maintenance** – This is perhaps the most important principle, but is often overlooked. Incredibly, many business owners have no idea what the front of their store looks like because they park and enter in the rear, and seldom step out front. It is important that window displays be spotlessly clean. Cobwebs, dirt, dead bugs, etc. should be cleaned, cracked glass should be repaired, and non-working light bulbs should be replaced. This should be done as part of the normal cleaning routine that includes interior displays.

## Historic Preservation Planning

Communities large and small utilize various historic preservation planning tools to bolster downtown revitalization efforts. Typical preservation tools used locally include design guidelines, design review, historic preservation ordinances, sign ordinances, local historic designations, and comprehensive plans. State and national preservation tools include rehabilitation tax credits, state and national registers of historic places, and historic building codes. Design Committees work to establish any missing local preservation tools, and too promote the availability of all tools.

These tools ensure that new developments, building improvements, and signage fit within the context of their historic surroundings. They also act as an incentive for investment in historic areas, such as the downtown.

## Learning Design by Example

Below is a list of some of Wisconsin Main Street Communities' favorite Design Committee projects that they completed between July 2004 and June 2005. They would be proud to share their experience. Contact information for each Main Street Program can be found in the directory on page 26.

### Building Improvements

- *Fond du Lac CyclerlyDowntown, Fond du Lac Partnership*
- *Facade improvements by Facility Services, Positively Pewaukee*
- *124 S. Broadway-home to GreenBayNet, On Broadway-Green Bay*



- *Thyme Worn Treasures expansion & second facade renovation, Rice Lake Main Street Association*
- *Spirits of Gillett–Adaptive Reuse of former Masonic Temple, Revitalize Gillett*
- *Upstairs Apartment of Dorothy Schueffner, Sheboygan Falls Chamber-Main Street*
- *New upstairs housing & façade restoration, 1016-24 Main Street, Stevens Point Main Street Program*
- *Anderl Hotel Façade Restoration, Chippewa Falls Main Street*
- *Interior of Minatori's Ristorante, Platteville Main Street Program*
- *Taco Johns, De Pere Area Business Alliance*
- *Natural Light Photography & Ceramics-N-Gifts, Community Improvement of Algoma*
- *Communicar Design, Lincoln Village Business Association*

### **Public Improvements**

- *3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Spring Cleaning, Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership*
- *Streetscape Redesign Workshop, Revitalize Gillett*
- *HUB Plaza Renovation, Stevens Point Main Street Program*
- *Duncan Creek Bike Trail Amenities Sponsor Campaign, Chippewa Falls Main Street*
- *Historic Mining Mural, Platteville Main Street Program*
- *Flowerbox Project, Watertown Main Street Program*
- *Riverwalk, MAGIC-Mishicot*
- *Viroqua Lamp Post Banner Project, Viroqua Partners*
- *Outlining downtown roof lines with white lights, Downtown West Bend Association*
- *Richmond Park, Community Improvement of Algoma*
- *Addition of new planters and benches, Tigerton Main Street*
- *City of Milwaukee Bike Rack Program, Lincoln Village Business Association*

### **Signage and Awnings**

- *Facade Grant Program, Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership*
- *Matching Sign Grant Program, Rice Lake Main Street Association*
- *Minatori's Ristorante, Platteville Main Street Program*
- *Reintroduction (& City Adoption) of Viroqua Sign Ordinance, Viroqua Partners*
- *4 new business signs utilizing the Sign Grant Program (28 to date), Community Improvement of Algoma*
- *Signage Grant Program, Lincoln Village Business Association*

### **Visual Merchandising**

- *Window Decorating Contest collaboration, On Broadway-Green Bay*
- *Bullseye Sporting Goods interior, Platteville Main Street Program*

### **Historic Preservation Planning**

- *Larsen Redevelopment Analysis, On Broadway-Green Bay*
- *Campaign to List Gillett Dental Building on National Historic Landmarks, Revitalize Gillett*
- *The Mural Project, Stevens Point Main Street Program*
- *Published 2nd pictorial history book: Images of America-Chippewa Falls Main Street, Chippewa Falls Main Street*
- *Development of Design Guidelines for HPC, Platteville Main Street Program*
- *UWM Student Project-Downtown Development Guide, Watertown Main Street Program*
- *Downtown Historic District Development Planning, Community Improvement of Algoma*



*Watertown: Flowerbox Project*

*Chippewa Falls: Duncan Creek Bike Trail amenities sponsored by Northwestern Bank*



# ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING

The purpose of economic restructuring is to fine-tune, or restructure, a downtown economy that is not running on all cylinders. The goal is to help downtown businesses identify demand for goods and services and capture sales opportunities. Those increased sales will help the downtown support higher rents, which in turn will increase the value of downtown property.

Economic Restructuring Committees learn about the district's current economic condition, identify opportunities for market growth, monitor and report the economic performance of the district. They strengthen existing businesses, recruit complementary ones, and find new economic uses for traditional Main Street buildings. They develop financial incentives and capital for building rehabilitations and business development. In short, they work to develop a market strategy that will result in an improved business mix, a stronger tax base, and increased investor confidence.

## Market Analysis and Monitoring

In layman's terms a downtown market analysis is the process of documenting details about the downtown's current condition, exploring changes occurring in the marketplace, verifying what consumers want from downtown, discovering what businesses the downtown market will support, and creating a downtown business development strategy. Economic Restructuring Committee volunteers inventory downtown businesses and buildings, survey



*Gillett: New business, Spirits of Gillett*

consumers and business owners, write a downtown market profile, and weigh the supply of various business categories against the demand for those business categories. Market analysis is as much art as science. While data will help the Economic Restructuring Committee and downtown businesses make more educated guesses about which opportunities to pursue, creativity, vision and values are equally important.

Market analysis will also provide valuable information to Main Street's other committees. The Promotion Committee can use market analysis results to identify a market niche and target specific promotions at specific customers. The Design Committee can use market analysis results to plan specific design projects to influence specific consumer behavior. The Organization Committee can use the market analysis process as a public relations vehicle.

Related to market analysis, and an often neglected responsibility of Economic Restructuring Committees, is monitoring economic performance within the Main Street district. The market analysis, and even the original Main Street application, serves as base-

line data. The ongoing task is to track and record information on changes, and to measure and report annual performance.

## Strengthen Existing Businesses

Once the Economic Restructuring Committee has a detailed picture of the downtown's economy, it shapes a business retention and expansion campaign that includes providing assistance and training to existing businesses. It is more efficient to retain than to recruit. The majority of a community's job growth or loss stems from the success or failure of its existing businesses. Through an attentive strategy to local businesses, you can retain your existing business base, while facilitating and encouraging its growth.

The key is to demonstrate a pro-business attitude. The Economic Restructuring Committee will benefit from their efforts to strengthen existing businesses when they begin to proactively recruit complementary businesses. Potential new businesses almost always have conversations with existing businesses to learn about the local business climate. If they hear positive testimonials about support for local businesses, they will be more receptive to efforts to recruit them.

### Tips for Keeping Businesses Happy

- Listen and share (communicate)
- Help them increase their profits
- Help reduce disincentives (solve business problems)
- Provide incentives
- Facilitate transfer of ownership

## Recruit Complementary Businesses

The next step is to shape a recruitment campaign to compliment existing businesses and buildings downtown. Recruitment targets businesses that people want and that the market will support. With their market analysis in hand, the Economic Restructuring Committee has a better chance of bringing business prospects downtown.

In the same way strengthening existing businesses helps when recruiting complementary businesses, strategic recruitment helps strengthen existing businesses. The key word is complementary. By recruiting businesses that enhance the downtown business mix and fit with or create business clusters, the Economic Restructuring Committee will increase foot traffic and spin off customers to existing businesses. Recruiting entertainment and civic uses can have a similar positive affect.

### Generating Recruitment Leads

- Expansion of existing businesses
- Community visits
- Trade associations, trade shows
- Sales representatives
- Home businesses and cottage industries
- Store managers
- Entrepreneur workshops
- Retail Lease Trac

Real estate development is a combination of business recruitment and building improvement. Economic Restructuring Committees will often work with Design Committees to accomplish the shared goal of adaptively reusing underutilized

downtown buildings. It takes steps along both fronts to get these larger projects off the ground. Real estate development can also include infill construction of new buildings and developing upper floor housing, upper floor offices, and small-scale industry. It may take an initial effort to revise local comprehensive plans or zoning ordinances to allow for the desired real estate development.

### Clustering Businesses

- Traffic generators
- Compatible cluster - unrelated products
  - *Demographic clusters- age, income, lifestyle*
- Complementary clusters - related products
  - *FIRE - finance, insurance, real estate*
- Competitive clusters - same products
  - *Comparison shopping - clothing, jewelry, restaurants*
- Convenience clusters - convenience products
  - *Neighborhood shopping - gas, food, drugs*

## Financial Incentives and Capital

Most Economic Restructuring Committees include volunteers with talent and experience in developing financial incentives and capital. For this reason, they often provide this service to Design Committees looking to develop incentives for building and sign improvements. The list of Economic Restructuring projects in this area include developing matching grant programs for

both façades and signs, low-interest revolving loan funds, rent assistance, free or below cost land, and small specialty training grants to keep businesses up to date in their sector. Another popular project is to develop brochures to promote the financial incentives created and other resources such as Investment Tax Credits and Enterprise Zones.

## Learning Economic Restructuring by Example

Below is a list of some of Wisconsin Main Street Communities' favorite Economic Restructuring Committee projects that they completed between July 2004 and June 2005. They would be proud to share their experience. Contact information for each Main Street Program can be found in the directory on page 26.

### Market Analysis

- *Business survey-Market Analysis Toolbox, Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership*
- *Business Owners Survey, Stevens Point Main Street Program*
- *2004 Downtown Chippewa Falls Market Analysis Update, Chippewa Falls Main Street Program*
- *Utilize business profiles to recruit businesses, Platteville Main Street Program*
- *Downtown Recruitment/Marketing Folder, Community Improvement of Algoma*

### Strengthen Existing Businesses

- *Business survey, Market Analysis Toolbox, Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership*
- *Held a seminar on "Consumer Trends", On Broadway-Green Bay*
- *Wisconsin Common Market Partnership, Rice Lake Main Street Association*



- *Business Improvement District Expansion, Chippewa Falls Main Street*
- *Development of free website for Country Fields through internship, Platteville Main Street Program*
- *Success Strategies for Mishicot Businesses by Margie Johnson, MAGIC-Mishicot*
- *Employer/Employee Training Workshops, Viroqua Partners*
- *Lincoln Village Business Directory, Lincoln Village Business Association*

### Recruit Complementary Businesses

- *Wisconsin Common Market Partnership, Rice Lake Main Street Association*
- *Starworks Communication and Marketing, Stevens Point Main Street Program*
- *Minatori's Ristorante-upscale Italian dining, Platteville Main Street Program*
- *Retail Investment Fund Grant-Lazaro's Cuban Cuisine, Lincoln Village Business Association*

### Financial Incentives and Capital

- *Revitalization Loan Program, Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership*
- *Low Interest Loan Pool (\$1 million) for Facade Renovation, Rice Lake Main Street Association*
- *USDA Rural Development Grant for three 12-week NxLevel Business Training Courses, Revitalize Gillett*
- *DTCF Business Assistance & Business Plan Development Guide, Chippewa Falls Main Street*
- *Appraisal with 10% cap rate & line of credit at 80% of appraisal, Platteville Main Street Program*
- *Mishicot Facade and Sign Grant Program MAGIC-Mishicot*
- *Business Development Grant, De Pere Area Business Alliance*
- *Jeffris and Rural Development grant applications, Tigerton Main Street*
- *Adopt a District Architectural Firm Program, Lincoln Village Business Association*

## Wisconsin Main Street Awards

### Best New Building Project

Winner: *Chippewa Falls*  
Korger's Decorating & Fine Furniture

### Best Downtown Special Event

Winner: *Wausau*  
Hot Air Balloon Rally and Chalk Fest

Honorable Mention: *Fond du Lac*  
Fall Festival

Honorable Mention: *Gillett*  
Remember When Dance

Honorable Mention: *Sharon*  
Wild West Adventure and Farmers Market

### Best Cultural Preservation Project

Winner: *Viroqua*  
Viroqua's Main Street History Book

Honorable Mention: *Portage*  
Living Windows 2004 – Peering into the Past

### Best Downtown Public Improvement Project

Winner: *Algoma*  
4<sup>th</sup> Street Enhancement Project

Honorable Mention: *Sharon*  
Sharon Streetscape Project

Honorable Mention: *Stevens Point*  
Rivermen Mural

### Best Historic Restoration Project

Winner (Tie): *Marshfield*  
The Thomas House

Winner (Tie): *Mishicot*  
Mishicot Historical Museum

### Best New Downtown Business

Winner: *Marshfield*  
The Guys Shop

### Historic Preservation Planning Award

Winner: *Viroqua*  
Viroqua Downtown Historic District

### Best Downtown Business Development Program

Winner: *Platteville*  
Young Professional Group

### Best Downtown Retail Event

Winner: *Platteville*  
“Meet and Greet”

Honorable Mention: *Beloit*  
Holidazzle 2004

### Best Volunteer Development

Winner: *Rice Lake*  
WITC Business & Marketing Department “Race to Reveal Rice Lake Secrets I-Spy Contest”

### Best Promotional Item

Winner: *Algoma*  
Historic Algoma Walking Tour Brochure

Honorable Mention: *Green Bay*  
Merge

Honorable Mention: *Wausau*  
“River District – Upstream from the Ordinary” business directory

### Best Interior Renovation Project

Winner: *Algoma*  
Clay on Steele Pottery & Gallery - Ellen Levenhagen, Mark Kolinski & Kris Kolinski

Honorable Mention: *West Bend*  
Schalla Jeweler

Honorable Mention: *Sheboygan Falls*  
Dorothy Schueffner upstairs residence

### **Best Facade Rehabilitation Over \$7,500**

*Winner:* *West Allis*  
Don Falk, B & K Bar Supply

*Honorable Mention:* *Columbus*  
Sharrow Drugs, Inc. - Nicholas L. Sharrow, R.Ph. &  
Margaret Sharrow Agnew

### **Best Facade Rehabilitation Under \$7,500**

*Winner:* *Darlington*  
Darlington Development Corporaton

### **Best Creative Fund Raising Effort**

*Winner:* *Pewaukee*  
Taste of Lake Country

### **Best Downtown Adaptive Reuse Project**

*Winner:* *Viroqua*  
Main Street Station Public Market

*Honorable Mention:* *Blanchardville*  
Rural Eyecare Clinic and Baker Construction

### **Best Public-Private Partnership in Downtown Revitalization**

*Winner:* *Green Bay*  
City of Green Bay and On Broadway, Inc.

### **Main Street Achievement Awards**

*For completing 5 years of intensive training in Main Street Approach*

Community Improvement of Algoma

Crandon Main Street

Watertown Main Street Program

### **2004 Main Street Spirit Award**

Positively Pewaukee

### **2005 Great American Main Street Award Semi-Finalist**

Chippewa Falls Main Street, Inc.

### **2004 Volunteers of the Year**

Algoma, Tom Levy  
Beloit, Bruce Slagoski and the Department of Public Works

Chippewa Falls, Evalyn Frasch  
Columbus, Susan Faulhaber  
Darlington, Jane Cleary  
Eagle River, Gary Fawcett  
Fond du Lac, Esther Pietrowski  
Gillett, Gary Pemrich

Green Bay, Mary Walch: **Honorary Captain**

Marshfield, Shirley Mook  
Mishicot, Tom Franz  
Pewaukee, Laurie Schwefel  
Platteville, Louise Jensen  
Portage, Gil Meisgeier  
Rice Lake, Carol Brown  
Richland Center, Heidi Shiere  
Sharon, Ronni Gerhardt  
Sheboygan Falls, Connie Buehler  
Stevens Point, Kelly Grenier  
Sturgeon Bay, Dixie Vanness  
Tigerton, Lee & Sue Langsten  
Two Rivers, Elvera Timm  
Viroqua, June Pedretti  
Watertown, Ellen Luchsinger  
Wausau, April Rosemurgy  
West Allis, Walter Zehm  
West Bend, Jan Werhand

### **2004 Honorary Board of Directors**

Algoma, Jan Langlais  
Beloit, Tom Hankins  
Blanchardville, Linda Flanigan  
Chippewa Falls, Fred Kuss  
Columbus, Nancy Osterhaus  
Darlington, Peggy North  
De Pere, Philip J. Danen  
Eagle River, Elizabeth (Betsy) Reach  
Fond du Lac, Gary Ott  
Gillett, Lorraine Gentz  
Green Bay, Greg Larsen  
Marshfield, Jim Reigel  
Mishicot, Randy Kliment

Pewaukee, Debbie Bayee  
Platteville, Mary Huck  
Portage, Jennie Dumbleton  
Rice Lake, Sandy Bonneville  
Richland Center, Dr. Jerry Bower  
Sharon, Marianne Danielsen  
Sheboygan Falls, Kate Holfeltz: **Honorary Chair**  
Stevens Point, Danial Johnson  
Sturgeon Bay, Brenda Paschke  
Tigerton, Kathi Polzin  
Two Rivers, Russell Rothwell  
Viroqua, Steve Felix  
Watertown, Brian Konz  
Wausau, Gary Freels  
West Allis, Jackie Ellington  
West Bend, Julie Sears

### **Main Street Executive Director Years of Service**

*One year:* Kathleen Braatz, Beloit  
Gary Cyrus, Crandon  
Christine Hulet, Blanchardville  
Karen Kenney, Sharon  
Gail Towers MacAskill, Watertown  
Susan Price, Richland Center  
*Two years:* Amy Altenburgh, Wausau  
Elaine Kroening, Pewaukee  
Brian Preiss, West Allis  
*Three years:* Naletta Burr, On Broadway, Green Bay  
Kathy Lindsey, Mishicot  
Neil White, Lincoln Village, Milwaukee  
Michael Zimmer, Two Rivers  
*Four years:* Michael Glime, Algoma  
*Five years:* Nancy Verstrate, Sheboygan Falls  
Cheryl Zmina, Platteville  
*Six years:* Rita Fritz, Eagle River  
Theresa Fuerbringer, West Bend  
Virginia Kauffman, Tigerton  
*Seven years:* Amy Charles, Darlington  
Becky McKee, Sturgeon Bay  
*Nine years:* Kathy Wellsandt, Rice Lake  
*Eleven years:* Ingrid Mahan, Viroqua  
Sheila Ashbeck Nyberg, Marshfield  
*Thirteen years:* Jim Schuh, Chippewa Falls  
Craig Tebon, Ripon

## Wisconsin Main Street Community Reinvestment Statistics: July 2004 to June 2005

Community	Public Improvements	Public Investment	Building Rehabilitations	Private Investment	New Buildings	Private Investment	Buildings Sold	Amount of Purchase
Algoma	2	\$3,836,485	8	\$175,228	1	\$1,660,000	1	\$100,000
Beloit	1	\$20,000	16	\$2,168,106	0	\$0	0	\$0
Blanchardville	0	\$0	2	\$64,000	0	\$0	2	\$260,000
Chippewa Falls	0	\$0	8	\$441,000	0	\$0	7	\$949,089
Columbus	0	\$0	2	\$46,900	0	\$0	3	\$710,000
Crandon	1	\$0	5	\$10,500	2	\$42,000	2	\$0
Darlington	1	\$100	6	\$56,700	0	\$0	1	\$55,000
De Pere	0	\$0	5	\$147,200	1	\$145,000	3	\$550,000
Eagle River	0	\$0	15	\$589,074	2	\$487,400	2	\$350,000
Fond du Lac	0	\$0	45	\$522,888	1	\$200,000	5	\$1,486,500
Gillett	1	\$600	1	\$40,000	2	\$725,000	4	\$345,000
Green Bay	2	\$101,000	7	\$660,700	0	\$0	10	\$1,970,000
Lincoln Village	1	\$147,000	18	\$422,500	0	\$0	4	\$424,000
Marshfield	1	\$1,500	10	\$1,076,200	7	\$28,510,670	9	\$2,313,000
Mishicot	2	\$1,620	1	\$8,000	0	\$0	4	\$594,000
Osceola	0	\$0	7	\$31,000	0	\$0	2	\$640,000
Pewaukee	2	\$95,000	5	\$2,636,500	0	\$0	0	\$0
Platteville	1	\$2,500	27	\$299,345	1	\$392,093	9	\$1,780,000
Portage	1	\$140,000	4	\$24,000	1	\$150,000	1	\$75,000
Rice Lake	0	\$0	16	\$156,095	0	\$0	6	\$856,000
Richland Center	8	\$62,570	10	\$32,250	0	\$0	0	\$0
Ripon	0	\$0	12	\$808,500	0	\$0	10	\$737,500
Sharon	4	\$33,308	6	\$1,880	0	\$0	2	\$0
Sheboygan Falls	1	\$350	12	\$53,500	0	\$0	4	\$372,000
Stevens Point	3	\$116,429	4	\$116,600	0	\$0	3	\$775,000
Sturgeon Bay	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Tigerton	1	\$40	1	\$250,000	4	\$335,000	0	\$0
Two Rivers	0	\$0	3	\$56,400	2	\$2,500,000	0	\$0
Viroqua	5	\$381,135.32	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	\$0	\$0
Watertown	1	\$10,000	14	\$326,190	0	\$0	2	\$677,500
Waupaca	1	\$254,000	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Wausau	0	\$0	21	\$3,364,670	0	\$0	0	\$0
West Allis	4	\$11,157	11	\$583,350	0	\$0	3	\$640,000
West Bend	27	\$717,312	37	\$859,550	0	\$0	10	\$2,729,700
<b>Totals</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>\$5,932,105</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>\$16,028,826</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>\$35,147,163</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>\$19,389,289</b>



Community	Housing Units	New Businesses	Business Expansions	Total New Jobs	Total Private Investment	Total Public & Private Investment
Algoma	0	3	0	7	\$1,935,228	\$5,771,713
Beloit	2	9	1	50	\$2,168,106	\$2,188,106
Blanchardville	0	3	0	6	\$324,000	\$324,000
Chippewa Falls	0	23	6	66.5	\$1,390,089	\$1,390,089
Columbus	0	4	0	6	\$756,900	\$756,900
Crandon	0	12	1	23	\$52,500	\$52,500
Darlington	1	3	2	5	\$111,700	\$111,800
De Pere	31	9	0	0	\$842,200	\$842,200
Eagle River	0	6	1	30	\$1,426,474	\$1,426,474
Fond du Lac	1	15	1	57	\$2,209,388	\$2,209,388
Gillett	0	7	0	12	\$1,110,000	\$1,110,600
Green Bay	0	11	0	26.5	\$2,630,700	\$2,731,700
Lincoln Village	1	6	0	15	\$846,500	\$993,500
Marshfield	1	16	1	240	\$31,899,870	\$31,901,370
Mishicot	0	4	0	5.4	\$602,000	\$603,620
Osceola	0	6	0	15	\$671,000	\$671,000
Pewaukee	0	4	0	53	\$2,636,500	\$2,731,500
Platteville	4	6	1	25	\$2,471,438	\$2,473,938
Portage	1	5	2	13	\$249,000	\$389,000
Rice Lake	0	8	0	19.5	\$1,012,095	\$1,012,095
Richland Center	1	11	0	18	\$32,250	\$94,820
Ripon	0	9	0	44.5	\$1,546,000	\$1,546,000
Sharon	1	0	0	0	\$1,880	\$35,188
Sheboygan Falls	0	5	0	6	\$425,500	\$425,850
Stevens Point	3	7	2	65	\$891,600	\$1,008,029
Sturgeon Bay	0	8	0	15	\$0	\$0
Tigerton	0	1	0	3	\$585,000	\$585,040
Two Rivers	0	1	0	1.5	\$2,556,400	\$2,556,400
Viroqua	0	0	0	\$0.00	\$0	\$381,135
Watertown	3	7	1	37	\$1,003,690	\$1,013,690
Waupaca	0	0	0	0	\$0	\$254,000
Wausau	2	33	0	144.5	\$3,364,670	\$3,364,670
West Allis	0	6	1	17	\$1,223,350	\$1,234,507
West Bend	0	10	3	33	\$3,589,250	\$4,306,562
<b>Totals</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1059.4</b>	<b>\$70,565,278</b>	<b>\$76,497,383</b>

# Main Street Directory

*as of November, 2005*

Community Improvement of Algoma  
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Blanchardville Community Pride, Inc.  
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Web Site: <http://www.blanchardville.com>

Chippewa Falls Main Street, Inc.  
Jim Schuh  
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Chippewa Falls, WI 54729-2812  
(715) 723-6661, Fax: (715) 720-4882  
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Eagle River Revitalization Program  
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Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership  
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On Broadway, Inc.  
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MAGIC (Mishicot Main Street Program)  
Kathy Lindsey  
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Prairie du Chien Downtown Revitalization, Inc.  
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Sharon Main Street Association  
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Sheboygan Falls Chamber-Main Street  
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Stevens Point Main Street  
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Sturgeon Bay Visitor & Convention Bureau  
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## **Council on Main Street**

*as of November, 2005*

Tim Anderson, Madison	WDAC
Dick Best, Menomonie	Chamber of Commerce
Ben Cress, Manitowoc	Business
Ann Eaves, Madison	At Large
John Gardner, Stevens Point	Planning
Shawn Graff, Slinger	WI Trust
Virginia Haske, Algoma	City, Village, Town
Darryl Johnson, Milwaukee	At Large
Lisa Kotter, Clintonville	At Large
Brian McCormick, Madison	WI Historical Society
Thomas Meiklejohn, III, Fond du Lac	Architectural
Jim O'Keefe, Madison	Dept. of Commerce
Cindi Pulver, Chippewa Falls	Business
Judy Wall, Prairie du Chien	At Large
Gerald White, Beloit	Financial

### Stepping down in 2005

Beverly Anderson, Darlington  
Dennis Leong, Madison  
Terrence Martin, Waupaca  
William Neureuther, Hubertus  
Penney Van Vleet, Pewaukee

## **Department of Commerce**

Mary P. Burke, Secretary  
Jim O'Keefe, Administrator, Division of  
Community Development

## **Bureau of Downtown Development Staff**

Jim Engle, Bureau Director and Coordinator  
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J. D. Milburn, Small Business Specialist  
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Don Barnum, Program Assistant  
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## **For More Information Contact:**

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## Top 10 Reasons Downtown is Important

- 1 Your central business district is a prominent employment center.
- 2 As a business center, your downtown plays a major role.
- 3 A downtown is a reflection of how a community sees itself.
- 4 A significant portion of your community's tax base comes from the downtown.
- 5 The central business district is an indispensable shopping and service center.
- 6 Your downtown is the historic core of your community.
- 7 Downtown represents a vast amount of public and private investment in your community.
- 8 A central business district is often a major tourist draw.
- 9 Downtown is usually the center of government.
- 10 Your downtown provides a sense of community and place.



*Fond du Lac: 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Downtown Fond du Lac Fall Festival*



*Rice Lake: Volunteers on petunia basket installation day*